

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7494

INFO SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 3452

PASS TIMBERLAKE ISA/DOD

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS OVIP (JAMES SCHLESINGER), CA

SUBJ SECDEF SCHLESINGER VISIT TO OTTAWA SEP 15-16

1. IN CONNECTION VISIT TO OTTAWA OF DEFENSE SECRETARY SCHLESINGER SEPT. 15-16, USEFUL IN PREPARATIONS MAY BE FOLLOWING COMMENT BY CANADIAN CDS GENERAL DESTRAZE TO DCM, DATT, AND GENERAL DANIEL JAMES, CINCNORAD, AT LUNCH IN OTTAWA SEPT. 8. WHEN ASKED WHAT WERE RELATIVE PURCHASE PRIORITIES FOR DND OF LRPA, FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, AND LAND EQUIPMENT (ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS, POSSIBLY TANKS, ETC.), DEXTRAZE SAID THEY WERE ALL IN THE SAME, TOP, URGENT PRIORITY CATEGORY. MILITARY REQUIREMENTS DEMANDED REPLACEMENTS IN ALL CATEGORIES EQUALLY NOW.

2. COMMENT: THIS CONFIRMS THE OBVIOUS THAT IN SEEKING GREATER GOC DEFENCE EFFORT WE HAVE THE NATURAL SUPPORT OF THOSE WHO WOULD BENEFIT MOST FROM SUCH INCREASED EFFORT, THE CANADIAN DEFENCE ESTABLISHMENT. INDEED, DND OFFICIALS HAVE INDICATED TO US THAT THEY ARE HOPING THEIR VIEWPOINT WILL RECEIVE STRONG SUPPORT FROM SECDEF IN FORM EXPOSITION OF PHILOSOPHICAL/STRATEGIC RATIONALE WHICH ARGUES FOR DEVOTION OF SUBSTANTIALLY GREATER
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GOC RESOURCES TO DEFENCE ACROSS THE BOARD.

3. FROM EXTAFF WE HAVE INDICATIONS THAT SUCH ARGUMENTATION MAY HAVE TO COPE WITH COUNTER-ARGUMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM TRUDEAU AND OTHERS AT POLICY LEVELS CONCERNING ALLEGED SCARCITY OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR DEFENCE AS OPPOSED TO OTHER PRIORITY NEEDS AND THE NEED THEREFORE TO ESTABLISH PRIORITIES FOR DEFENCE EQUIPMENT ACQUISITIONS. PM REPORTEDLY CONSIDERING WHETHER, FOR INSTANCE, GOC SHOULD BE FOCUSING ON NATO EQUIPMENT NEEDS FOR A SHORT WAR OR LONGER WAR. PM REPORTED ALSO WEIGHING THESE QUESTIONS AGAINST REQUIREMENTS FOR NORTH AMERICAN DEFENCE AND ASSERTION OF CANADIAN SOVEREIGNTY.

4. WHILE GOC WILL UNDOUBTEDLY SEEK EMERGE FROM TALKS WITH SOME BASIS FOR PARING DOWN DND SHOPPING LIST AS DEFENCE REVIEW REACHES DECISION STAGE, WE SENSE SOMEWHAT GREATER RECEPTIVITY ON TRUDEAU PART WITH RESPECT TO DEFENCE MATTERS THAN HIS PAST PERFORMANCE IN THIS FIELD WOULD INDICATE. WHATEVER THIS MAY STEM FROM (E.G. REPRESENTATIONS FROM OTHER NATO COUNTRY PMS AND REALIZATION THAT CANADA'S NATO PERFORMANCE MAY HAVE SIGNIFICANT BEARING ON GOC HOPES FOR "CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIP" WITH EEC; DOMESTIC CRITICISM OVER CANADIAN INABILITY TO MONITOR LET ALONE POLICE ITS ARCTIC AND POTENTIAL 200-MILE FISHING ZONES), FACT IS THAT FORCEFUL PRESENTATION ON DEFENCE MATTERS, NOT SEEN AS DND-ENGINEERED, MADE TO TRUDEAU BY PERSON OF SECDEF'S STATURE, COULD HAVE IMPORTANT IMPACT AT CRITICAL POINT IN CANADIAN DEFENCE POLICY DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.
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